

James L. Langworthy

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Whereupon,

Mr. Payne offered the following.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary be allowed to withdraw his communication of the 24th Nov., and that the proceedings of the Council in relation thereto, be also withdrawn.

These controversies growing out of a conflict of jurisdiction between coordinate branches of the government, were never thoroughly healed.

The Legislature attempted to override the functions of the Governor and Secretary and did many foolish things, and we present the following as one of them.

*Resolved*, By the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Iowa, That the Post Master of Davenport, Scott county, Iowa, be and he is hereby authorized to have the Mail from Davenport to Du Buque conveyed in two horse post coaches during the present session of the Legislative Assembly."

Here is the doctrine of "State (or Territorial) Sovereignty" first asserted for young Iowa, it having before been supposed that Congress regulated the mails.

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### JAMES L. LANGWORTHY.

The following Biographical Sketch of JAMES LYON LANGWORTHY was prepared by a committee appointed at an Early Settlers' Meeting, held on the 17th of March, 1865.

The ancestors of JAMES LYON LANGWORTHY were originally from Wales, in the west of England. They migrated to America shortly after the restoration of Charles II, about the year 1665, and that branch of the family from which the subject of this sketch descended, settled permanently many years afterwards in Vermont.

His father Dr. STEPHEN LANGWORTHY, resided at Windsor,

in that State, and James, the eldest of his children, was born there on the 20th January, 1800. While a youth his parents removed to St. Lawrence county, New York, thence to Erie county, Pennsylvania, subsequently to Ohio, and in the year 1820, to Edwardsville, Illinois.

James accompanied the family in these several migrations. He had an iron constitution, great power of endurance, and had inherited Puritan hardihood and enterprise. Though co-operating thus far cheerfully and energetically as a pioneer with his father, he longed to start out in life for himself, and try his fortunes in the far, far West.

Leaving the parental roof in 1821 or 1822, young Langworthy entered upon a career of his own, thus manifesting at an early period, that enterprise, activity, decision, and energy, which afterwards, formed the distinguishing traits of his character.

In 1824, having learned of the lead mines of the Northwest, he made his way to Galena, performing a large part of the journey on foot. Galena was then a small settlement, containing four or five houses and a few shanties, all occupied by miners. Mr. Langworthy immediately engaged in mining, and thenceforward identified himself with the mining interest of the Northwest.

In 1827 Mr. Langworthy was employed by the United States government to visit the different bands of Winnebago, Sauk and Fox Indians, at the portage of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, for the purpose of negotiating a treaty with them, and to induce them to remove to other hunting grounds westward of the Mississippi. He accompanied Gen. Henry Dodge, who subsequently was Governor of Wisconsin, and Senator in Congress from that State. The Indians assembled, and a treaty was entered into, which secured to the United States all northwestern Illinois and southwestern Wisconsin.

Mr. Langworthy returned to Galena and engaged in mercantile pursuits, and afterwards in mining and smelting at Buncombe—an almost forgotten locality, a few miles northeast

of Galena, and sixteen miles from the Mississippi river. In the latter business he was associated with his brother-in-law, Orrin Smith, Esq., afterwards known as one of the most successful pioneers in steamboat commerce on the Upper Mississippi.

The lead mines in the Dubuque region, on the west side of the Mississippi, were an object of great interest to the miners working about Galena. These mines were known to be rich in lead ore. They were first worked by Julien Dubuque, a Frenchman, who, in the year 1788, obtained a permit from the Governor to mine, when the whole region west of the Mississippi belonged to the Spanish Government. Julien Dubuque died 1810, twenty years previous to this period, and the Indians shortly afterwards drove off the followers of Dubuque. Thenceforward they worked the mines themselves, and sold the mineral at Galena.

To explore these mines, to ascertain their mineral wealth, and to obtain permission to work them, was eminently desirable. In 1829 Mr. Langworthy resolved to visit the Dubuque mines. Crossing the Mississippi at a point now known as Dunleith, in a canoe, and swimming his horse by its side, he landed at a spot now known as the Jones Street Levee. Before him spread out a beautiful prairie, on which now stands our cherished city of Dubuque. Two miles south, at the mouth of Catfish Creek, was an Indian village of Sauks and Foxes. Thither our adventurer proceeded. He was peaceably received and kindly entertained by the natives. He endeavored to obtain their permission to mine in their hills, but this they refused. He, however, succeeded in gaining the confidence of the Chief to such an extent as to be allowed to travel in the interior for three weeks, and to explore the region during that period. He employed two young Indians as guides, and traversed in different directions the whole region lying between the Maquoketa and Turkey rivers. He first crossed the prairie in a southwesterly direction to the Maquoketa, and struck that stream at the rapids, where the thriving

village of Cascade now stands. Finding some indications of iron, he followed the Maquoketa down through one of the largest bodies of timber in the State, discovering traces of the valuable beds of iron ore near what is now known as the town of Canton, Jackson county. Turning northward, he traversed the country west of the Dubuque mines. He found it well adapted to agricultural purposes, and capable of sustaining a large farming population.

He returned to the village, secured the good will of the Indians, and returned to Galena, forming plans of future operations, to be executed as soon as circumstances would permit.

In 1830, James L. Langworthy, his brother Lucius,<sup>†</sup> and others, with the consent of the Indians, crossed the Mississippi and commenced mining in the vicinity around Dubuque. The first act resembling legislation, was drawn up by Mr. Langworthy. It was an agreement regulating the claims of miners and the amount of labor necessary to hold a claim.

They continued to work successfully until the winter of 1831, when the United States Government ordered the miners to desist and to remove from the Territory west of the Mississippi. Mr. L. and his co-laborers obeyed the order, and abandoning their claims for a season went to Galena.

The Black-Hawk War soon after broke out. It was occasioned by an unwillingness on the part of the Indians to carry out the stipulations of the treaty of 1827, before mentioned. The chiefs and braves with a true Indian attachment to their hunting grounds and graves of their fathers, and also feeling jealous and resentful at the continued advance of the whites, began to exhibit signs of hostility; this was further promoted by the distinguished chief, Black Hawk, who had increased his influence with all the allied tribes, so that in 1832, he had become head chief of all the Sac and Fox tribes of Iowa, and of the Winnebago bands of Illinois and Wisconsin. Encouraged by his brother, an Indian prophet, who had united the tribes by his eloquence, Black Hawk made a des-

perate effort to resist the onward march of the race that makes every obstacle yield to its progress.

As soon as hostilities commenced, Mr. James L. Langworthy joined the volunteer force under the command of General Dodge, and rendered valuable services as a scout. He served through the whole campaign, and participated in the battle of Bad Axe, which terminated the war.

Black Hawk surrendered himself a prisoner, and with other hostages was conveyed to Rock Island. At this place the terms of a treaty were soon after settled upon and concluded.

The war being ended, most of the regulars were sent to other localities and the volunteers discharged. Only a few of these latter were retained who were needed to determine the limits of the lands to be given up to the United States Government, from their intimate knowledge of the country. Among these none had explored this region more than Mr. Langworthy, and he remained six weeks at Rock Island by order of Gen. Winfield Scott to furnish geographical and other data for making up the history of the campaign; and also to afford additional knowledge of the natural resources of the country to be ceded to the United States.

After the treaty stipulations were agreed upon and the treaty signed by Gen. Winfield Scott and the Indian chiefs, the miners supposed that they had then a right to return to their claims in Iowa, as the Dubuque mines were included in the ceded territory. Mr. Langworthy having returned to civil pursuits came over to Iowa, and with his associates prosecuted their mining operations with great success.

In the fall of 1832, they were again ordered to leave their mineral diggings and their improved claims. This order was from the United States Government, and it was issued on the ground that the treaty of Rock Island had not been ratified by the Senate and approved. The order was enforced by Gen. Zachary Taylor, afterwards President of the United States, who came from Ft. Crawford with a sufficient force to execute it.

Mr. Langworthy retired to an island near the west bank of

the river, taking the precaution to carry away his mineral treasures, and he with some of his brother pioneers, passed the winter of 1832 on the island, amid their piles of pig lead amounting to several hundred thousand pounds in weight.

The treaty of Rock Island was an important epoch in the history of Iowa. In June, 1833, the treaty was perfected, the whole eastern portion of Iowa became the theatre of the white man's enterprise, and a rapid settlement soon followed. The miners returned, and Mr. L. and his brother pioneers took possession of their well earned mineral prospects and their homestead claims. In this same year (1833) Mr. Langworthy assisted in building the first school house in Iowa, near the site of the present Female Seminary. The village of Dubuque now had a local habitation and a name, and gradually enlarged. In 1840, Mr. Langworthy married Miss Agnes Milne, a native of Edinburg, Scotland. The issue of this marriage is a son and three daughters, all of whom survive. From his permanent settlement in Dubuque in 1833, he has been identified with every movement that was wisely designed to promote the prosperity of our city. He has his reward. He has seen the naked prairies on which he first landed become the site of a city of 15,000 inhabitants. He has seen the cause of education fostered and encouraged, and the small school house which he aided in constructing is now represented by three substantial edifices, wherein 2,000 children are being trained for usefulness and virtue. He has seen churches erected in every part of the city, and railroads connecting the east and the west with Dubuque. He has seen the city that he loved advancing in wealth, virtue and refinement.

His demise was sudden, unexpected. He went on the Dubuque & Southwestern railroad to Monticello on Monday, the 13th of March, 1865, and died suddenly on the following morning at 7 o'clock. The evening train brought the news of his death and his remains.

Seldom have we witnessed so much consternation at such an event, and *never* more sincere, heartfelt sympathy. A

modest notice appeared in our city papers inviting the "Early Settlers to convene at the office of the School Board for the purpose of expressing their sympathy with the family and their appreciation of the loss the community had sustained. At the appointed hour a large number assembled, more than the apartment could accommodate. Peter A. Lorimier, Esq., was called to the chair. He stated the object of the meeting and a committee of five was appointed to report resolutions. During the retirement of the committee, the meeting was addressed by Capt. Harrison, Gen. Jones, Hon. Platt Smith, Richard Waller, Esq., Judge Burt. The committee returned and reported the following resolutions :

"WHEREAS, It has pleased God in His wise providence to remove from life Mr. James L. Langworthy, for a quarter of a century our valued friend and fellow-citizen, with whom our association created a high regard, and whose death prompts us to affectionately cherish and respect his memory, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That in the sudden death of Mr. Langworthy the Northwest has parted with one of its first settlers and Dubuque with its earliest citizen..

"*Resolved*, That no old or new settler ever cherished the reputation or labored for the prosperity of our city more fervently and tirelessly than did Mr. Langworthy. Dubuque was his home, and he loved it with an undivided affection.

"*Resolved*, That as a citizen he was enterprising, as a neighbor he was courteous, and as a man he was above reproach ; while, as a husband and father, his devotion was almost without a parallel.

"*Resolved*, That we tender to the bereaved family of the deceased our heartfelt sympathy.

"*Resolved*, That a committee of five be appointed to prepare a biographical sketch of the deceased for publication."

After reading the resolutions, the meeting was further addressed by Gen. Warner Lewis, A Levi, Esq., Rev. Jas. R. Goodrich and Gen. Wiltse.

The interment of Mr. L. was postponed that the numerous relatives might be notified of his decease and have time to attend. The funeral obsequies took place on Tuesday, 21st March. The day was unusually inclement—a raw wind, rain



and snow. Notwithstanding, a large concourse of his fellow-citizens attended. There were present a number of friends and relatives from various parts of the country. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. Mr. Reed, Pastor of the Universalist Congregation of this city. An impressive discourse was delivered, suitable to the occasion. The remains, enclosed in a metallic coffin, were borne to Linwood Cemetery, and deposited in the family vault.

James L. Langworthy was of a prompt, active and decisive character. His mind seized upon the useful, the real and tangible. He had little regard for the abstract, the theoretical, the ideal; hence, his efforts were ever devoted to substantial advantages, to the improvement of his own fortune, to enlarge and enrich the city of his residence, to aggrandize his country. He was willing to follow, but when circumstances required, he was ready to lead. He did not seek the post of honor, nor would he shrink from its responsibilities or dangers. No citizen had less aspiration for political distinction or official station. He preferred rather to merit the approbation of his fellow-citizens, than to court popularity. He was never a candidate for the suffrages of the people, unless on some rare occasion the pressure of public sentiment induced him to yield to the general voice. But Mr. L. needs no eulogy. The brief record of his career, portraying in simple phrase his unremitting exertions to advance his fortune by the pursuit of useful and honest enterprise; his unsurpassed affection for his family and friends, his devotion to the prosperity of his country, his zeal for the preservation and perpetuity of our liberties, his public spirit, his liberal sentiments, his benevolent acts, are his best panegyric.—*Dubuque Herald*, March 30, 1865.

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